

**Twelfth Annual Meeting of the
Corporate Archives Forum
April 30-May 1, 2009
IBM Learning Center
20 Old Post Road
Armonk, NY 10504**

Meeting Notes

The twelfth annual meeting of the Corporate Archives Forum was held April 30-May 1, 2009 in Armonk, NY. The IBM Archives hosted the meeting. Present were:

- Elizabeth Adkins, formerly with Ford Motor Company
- Menzi Behrnd-Klodt, American Girl
- Mike Bullington, McDonald's Corporation
- Bruce Bruemmer, Cargill
- Paul Lasewicz, IBM
- Ed Rider, Procter & Gamble
- Becky Haglund Tousey, Kraft Foods
- Dean Weber, Ford Motor Company

Greg Hunter of Long Island University served as facilitator and note-taker.

To protect confidentiality, these meeting notes do not attribute comments to any attendee or company. The attendees are sharing these notes with the wider archival community in the hopes of furthering the discussion of issues.

This year's meeting included the following topics:

1. Archives and Anniversary Celebrations
2. Marketing Archives at a World-Wide Meeting
3. Possible SAA Advanced Business Archives Workshop
4. Strategies for Archives in a Hunkering-Down Environment
5. Digital Asset Management Using Media Bin and Stellent
6. Web Capture
7. Archives Support to Global Brands
8. Legal Releases
9. Electronic Records Boot Camp
10. Global Archives Using Microsoft SharePoint and MOSS

Session 1: "Archives and Anniversary Celebrations"

This is a difficult economic climate in which to be celebrating an anniversary. You have to clarify the value an anniversary celebration brings to the company. What strategic use will this be to the company? Will it help to open new markets? Will it reintroduce the company to a growth market?

Any celebration must balance U.S. and non-U.S. considerations. Emerging and established countries will have different needs. Some countries may choose not to participate at all.

Companies are facing a generational shift. There are fewer lifetime employees. Almost half of employees are working for the company for five years or less. An anniversary celebration could serve as outreach to new employees. In fact, there could be very little external focus. An anniversary can help new employees to understand where their managers come from.

The challenge is figuring out how to have the past play the right role. How do we put the past in the same “frame” as the present? We have to bring forward what still is relevant from the past.

President Obama is very good at using the past for context. He is masterful in using history.

There usually is a huge buildup to a key anniversary but a rapid drop-off in interest after the anniversary.

There will need to be some kind of publication. The archives plays a key role in this. Books have mixed value. It takes a great deal of time and effort to complete an academic volume, but no one reads academic volumes. There may be advantages to doing something simpler. Companies also are trying to be “green” and a fat paper book is not in keeping with this.

Coffee table volumes have a longer shelf life than an academic volume. Executives still give them out years later.

One company put together a collection of key pictures and other images – people, places, and products. The images were posted (with metadata) on a password-protected Website for access by authorized employees and key vendors. Identification of content did take some time. This company used Wieck Media Services in Dallas for scanning. Every image that was requested was added to the site so it was available to everyone. There were 30,000 downloads from 46 countries.

Another suggestion is to get journalists to help identify what they would like to write about. The archives then can gather the supporting materials.

In celebrating an anniversary, you have to avoid being self-congratulatory. The celebration needs to be inspiring and motivating to all human beings, not just employees and customers.

Session 2: “Marketing Archives at a World-Wide Meeting”

One archives provided a booth at a worldwide company meeting. The objective was to use the archives’ presence to elevate its status within the company.

The archives conducted oral histories with long-time employees who were attending the meeting. The archives also provided visual materials for speeches.

At its booth, the archives honored achievements and highlighted core values. The archives had a board of “unidentified photos” that they asked people to help identify.

The booth was interesting enough that attendees took photographs while they were at the booth. The photographs later were posted to the archives Website for downloading.

In terms of values, the archives listed today's values and linked each one to a statement by the founder. The current CEO highlighted this connection in opening remarks to all attendees.

The archives also sponsored a reunion for employees with 30+ years of service. There was a hospitality room, reception, exhibits, concert, and remarks by current executives.

The archivist can't wait for people to tell you they need a booth. You have to be an historian identifying things that may be relevant and a public relations person reaching out to potential users.

It is important to identify an executive champion. In one company, the executive champion is trying to understand today's economic challenges by looking at how the company handled the 1930s. History is being used as a learning tool for senior executives.

The archives achieved the following results: visibility (attendance), viability (values), and credibility (trusted partner, donations).

Session 3: "Possible SAA Advanced Business Archives Workshop"

There was a brainstorming session about the content and structure of a potential SAA Advanced Business Archives Workshop.

Attendees at the Basic Workshop have requested more detailed discussion on:

- Electronic records
- Preservation management
- Legal issues
- Marketing archives programs

Another way to structure the content might begin by looking at previous CAF topics. The following topics were mentioned as possibilities for the advanced workshop:

- Web capture
- Interaction/integration with records management
- Compliance
- Proving your value/remaining relevant during times of change
- Collection management systems
- Digital asset management systems
- Mergers, acquisitions, and divestitures
- Non-North American assets
- E-mail management
- Working with Information management
- Internal publicity
- Supporting anniversaries

There are a number of questions about how to structure an advanced workshop:

- 1 day or 2 days?
- Case studies? Best practices?
- Formal presentations vs. informal discussions?

- Generic presentation (relevant to entire archives profession) vs. corporate spin (relevant to business archives)?

Electronic records is one of the topics always requested. You need to understand the information technology environment that is unique to your company. A corporate archivist can't move the business singlehandedly. Corporate archivists need to be prepared to leap upon an opportunity when it presents itself. We can't feel guilty about not taking the lead on electronic records.

One idea is to title the workshop: "Building Relationships." It would focus on working with IT, Legal, Marketing, and Records Management. The workshop could combine case studies and lectures. It could even be flexible enough to have attendees bring their own case studies. In fact, there could be a multi-year schedule with rotating content, so people can attend it more than once.

Will people be expecting to leave with answers rather than just discussion? Do we need to get outside experts as presenters who can recommend best practices?

Whatever form it takes, the workshop should have two Characteristics: discussions in a business context and emphasis on key learnings.

Session 4: "Strategies for Archives in a Hunkering-Down Environment"

CAF members had a wide-ranging discussion of the current economic climate and strategies for dealing with it. Among the points discussed were:

- Travel is being cut in all corporations
- More functions are being outsourcing. Also contractors (like legal) are being asked to cut fees.
- The archives can't get more space, so it can't expand collection.
- General and administrative budgets are being cut
- Contract workers in archives are being cut.
- Archives are so far down in the pecking order that they can avoid some cuts.
- In some places, even if the budget hasn't been cut, there are spending freezes in place.
- Archives are looking for ways to get things for free.
- As facilities are closed, the records that need to be acquired increase in volume.
- Some archives have had to pull back from international initiatives.
- Archives are conducting low-cost outreach to employees – like writing articles for the corporate Web site.
- Records management also is being cut.
- In the future, costs of discovery are likely to be higher – but this doesn't seem to be a driver at the moment in some corporations.
- In one company, Legal is supportive (in general) about the importance of maintaining records but is not willing to come to bat for the archives.
- An archives can't point to what "might" happen. The archives has to point to a specific case of something that did happen in order to get support. It is a risk-management analysis.

- In some corporations, survival may be a higher priority than compliance. Also, some companies are doing the bare minimum with compliance – they have policies but nothing behind them.
- Corporations can't tell employees that they have to manage e-mail without providing tools.
- New Federal Rules of Civil Procedures have affected electronic discovery, especially by shortening time frames. Some companies are focusing on e-discovery systems to identify records and keep them from being destroyed.
- Archives need to “hunker down wisely” by being careful about costs.
- Some corporations are slowing down bill payments – taking 60-120 days to pay. This can have a ripple effect.
- It pays to be small in this environment – a small part of a bigger budget pool.
- There is a corporate interest in sustainability and “green” initiatives. Corporations are saving travel, etc., by putting more content on the Intranet. It may be the time to emphasize preserving digital records rather than printing them on paper.
- Archivists are getting used to saying “no.” However, this isn't good for building long-term relationships within the company.
- Archives can no longer try to do more with less. We can't ask more of our staffs. We have to wait until more resources are available.
- We can't really push new ideas. We have to wait until the timing seems right.

Session 5: “Digital Asset Management Using Media Bin and Stellent”

CAF members discussed their experiences using Media Bin and Stellent for digital asset management within their corporations.

The Media Bin discussion covered the following:

- Interwoven is the company that sells Media Bin and it is a Microsoft SharePoint strategic partner.
- The archives was “first adopter” within the corporation, so it was able to set standards and taxonomy. Because this was an “enterprise project,” the archives was not charged for the necessary customization and end user interface. The corporation had been talking about digital asset management for three years and then wanted to implemented Media Bin in two months. But the archives was ready.
- There is no maximum field length, and allows custom metadata fields, which are useful features.
- There only are two download options for end users in this archive's application: Web-ready or PowerPoint-ready. End users must contact the archives if they want the raw high res file.
- This project raised the visibility of the archives with Information Technology. Archivists showed that they understand taxonomy and metadata and had an enterprise perspective.
- Another company has scanned permissions and other paperwork. They also use Media Bin for newspaper clippings.

- Media Bin does not have a good print function. You can't print the image and metadata on one page.
- You can put security and digital watermarks on images.
- Turnover in IT is a problem with systems over time.
- The archivist should say to vendors, "Tell me what it does," rather than having the vendors say, "Tell me what you need." This may be a better beginning point for the discussion.
- It could be useful to share Scope of Work documents for Digital Asset Management procurements.

The Stellent discussion then covered the following:

- One archives tried not to customize the system, otherwise it is difficult to update the main software.
- Others in the company already were using it, so there was little support for adding another vendor.
- The system generates different "renderings" (resolutions) of the image
- The out-of-box system did not comply with library standards, especially controlled vocabulary. Also field lengths are limited to 512K
- The archives established a separate place to search for historical images. This is not part of the main search because most people won't want historical images.
- One archives previously used InMagic. Later, Compliance and IT Security required a more robust package than InMagic. Stellent already was being used in-house.
- One archives found a partner that was willing to share the cost, because they had a need to store born-digital content.
- One company spent two years on development. In the middle, Oracle acquired Stellent, which affected the pricing schedule.
- In one corporation, "Ready Images" came from the Copyright Center. Photographers added their own descriptions rather than using a controlled vocabulary. Photographers have a vested interest in having their works downloaded, so they provide a great deal of uncontrolled – and irrelevant – metadata.
- One corporation doesn't want to rely on social tagging. People aren't willing to spend the time. This is not part of the corporate culture (maybe it is as Microsoft).
- One corporation has "trusted vendors" able to access images inside the firewall.
- Stellent has more metadata fields than the archives needs. Other people are using similar fields, so fields are proliferating and response time is slowing.
- Enterprise software may be unsuitable for softly-structured data like this, especially if you don't permit customization of the COTS (Commercial Off-the-Shelf System). There is a tension.

An archives may need separate tools for managing images and text. It is hard to find one system that handles both very well.

Session 6: “Web Capture”

One archives got its feet wet in electronic records by doing web capture. They wanted to try to preserve and recreate the visitor experience on the Web site.

This corporation partnered with the San Diego Supercomputing Center. SDSC developed a system called “iRODS,” which incorporates all InterPARES attributes for a digital preservation repository. The system runs a hash algorithm and self-corrects any errors. It has been very affordable since a graduate student conducts the “crawls” of the corporate Web site.

The main corporate Web site actually is a portal driven by 52 other Web sites. Firewall issues have come into play – the archives could not do this capture without someone “on the inside” of Web development.

The statistics on each capture are:

- 30,000 files
- 6GB of storage
- 600 directories
- Many different file formats (including Flash).

One corporate archives was approached by archiveit.org. Their Web crawler is based upon “Heritrix,” which is used by the Internet Archives. The corporation tried this crawler. There were some broken links that had to be repaired manually. Also, the system does not generate a hash algorithm to verify data integrity.

One corporation is looking at digital repositories from the research library community: DSpace and LOCKSS.

The boundary between the “captured Web” and the “live Web” is difficult to draw. For example, one corporation found that its current stock price is displayed in the archived Web site.

Session 7: “Archives Support to Global Brands”

One strategy to build support for an archival program is to go first to the people feeling “pain.” This often is External Relations staff facing anniversaries.

One corporate archives prepared very specific guidance for staff in China about how to acquire External Relations materials and develop an archives. The archives next will try this approach in Germany.

With global brands, one archives has identified key documents for storage on a SharePoint site. This archives is creating the tools for people who want to preserve their history. The corporate archives can’t do it all.

Session 8: “Legal Releases”

One corporation requires everyone who appears in a photograph to sign a release. This can be tricky with minors – is the legal guardian present to sign the release? Even employees need to sign releases.

It may be ideal to have one release cover all situations, but there may be business needs to have different releases. For example, there may be a scaled-down release for focus groups.

A release should be broad enough to cover all rights (present and future). It is important to include the right to use in derivative works.

An archives needs to be able to link the release with the photo or video – and maintain this relationship over time.

The company has the “right” to control use, but does it have the “responsibility?” What if a third party uses the image in a way you didn’t intend? Corporations have been sued over this because of their deep pockets.

There can be conflicts of wording in agreements drafted by the company and a talent agency. In this case, there may need to be negotiation.

There can be a release for the use of premises in photographs. There also can be a release if pets are used and the company needs to be protected against possible animal bad behavior.

What if the archives has photos and no releases? You can explain the risks and benefits and get the senior executive to agree to the use of the photo. It also may depend upon where the image will be used – broadcast television and Internet use require more care.

ASCAP and BMI have Web sites where you can search for rights holders. The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) also searches for rights and sometimes will escrow fees.

Session 9: “Electronic Records Boot Camp”

A couple of corporate archivists have attended the SAA “Electronic Records Boot Camp” at the San Diego Supercomputer Center. This was a week with computer scientists who understand the archival domain.

The SDSC system (iRODS) can run on different systems – biodiversity in the cyber environment prevents an error from destroying the entire system. Once you define the rules, the machine conducts the task.

Corporate archivists have a desire to do something now, to get our hands dirty. There are files in our corporations that need to be preserved along with metadata about them.

Paper already is peripheral in many departments. Paper is not the record copy any longer. There is decentralized management of issues and the resulting records.

Many front-line managers are “just trying to survive” in the area of recordkeeping. People are using PST files to get around limitations of mailbox size. It is “management by crisis” rather than managing records systematically.

Corporations need to have an electronic tool in place in order to help front-line managers. Without a tool, we can’t enforce policy. We need something other than network shared folders.

What about Microsoft SharePoint as a solution? Pricing can be an issue. Also, the Records Center and Document Center Modules are separate.

One archivist stated that there isn’t enough time to recover e-records already produced. From 1995 to 2010 may turn out to be the most undocumented period in our history. We need a system that not only assigns metadata and context at the creation of a document, but does so automatically rather than manually. The short-term approach is strategic preservation (like getting press releases manually) and oral history.

The danger is having digital files completely devoid of context and not associated with a series.

Reference activity has become a key driver in making appraisal decisions. “If we don’t see a reference need, we’re not going to deal with the stuff.”

Session 10: “Global Archives Using Microsoft SharePoint and MOSS”

One corporation is implementing a new global archives solution for holdings and content management.

The centralized intranet-based global Historical Archives content management system will:

- Serve the functional needs of the Archives staff to maintain physical and intellectual control of long-term records
- Provide employees worldwide with web-based, user-friendly 24/7 access

The benefits of the new system are:

- Brings archives content closer to employees
- Allows employees to access records directly rather than having the archives serve as gate-keeper
- Frees-up archives staff for more value-added, strategic projects and outreach
- Facilitates retiring of outdated stand-alone applications and leverages current enterprise applications and platforms

The new system will manage all content in 3 repositories with one point of access:

- Digital assets (especially photos and other images)
- Electronic records
- Descriptive metadata about physical records

SharePoint/MOSS will serve as the access/search layer with the actual content a layer below in repositories for the different types of content.

The Company is eventually getting rid of all shared drives – departments will have to use SharePoint team sites and SharePoint document centers. All company intranet sites must also be upgraded to SharePoint 2000.

In this corporation, originating departments are responsible for migrating content and managing it. This requires training and ongoing technical support from IT. A great deal of migration will occur in the next year.

Your archives system vendor can't do this for you. You're going to have to adapt the big systems within the company for archival use. In the future, SharePoint will be as ubiquitous as Microsoft Office. SharePoint (and adapting to it) would be a good case study for the advanced workshop.

The discussion then turned to SharePoint and Records Management. SharePoint has some Records management capability but it is not put together in a thoughtful way. SharePoint without proper controls might lead to more problems down the road -- but you can enforce metadata standards and establish workflows within SharePoint.

The concept of "official record" is becoming outdated in a digital environment. There is a need to manage all information, not just "records."